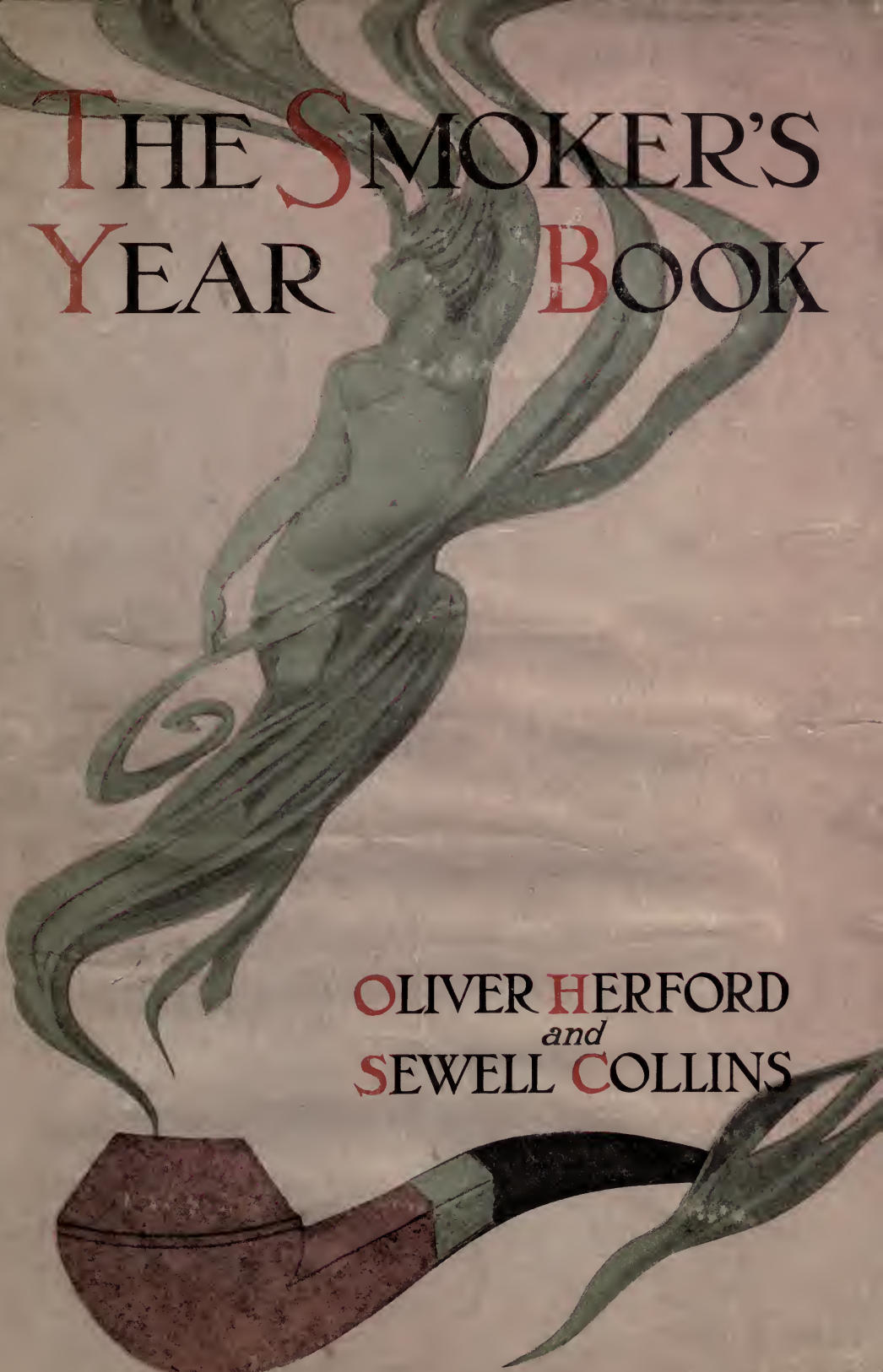
THE SMOKER'S YEAR BOOK



OLIVER HERFORD
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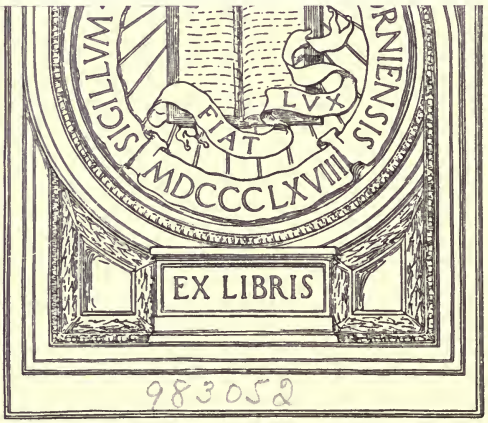

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THE SMOKER'S YEAR BOOK

THE SMOKER'S YEAR BOOK

The verses written on paper by

Oliver Herford

&

The pictures drawn on stone by

Sewell Collins

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The whole published by

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JANUARY

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JANUARY

NOW Time the harvester surveys
His sorry crops of yesterdays;
Of trampled hopes and reaped regrets,
And for another harvest whets
His ancient scythe, eying the while
The budding year with cynic smile.
Well, let him smile; in snug retreat
I fill my pipe with honeyed sweet,
Whose incense wafted from the bowl
Shall make warm sunshine in my soul,
And conjure mid the fragrant haze
Fair memories of other days.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY

BEND you now before the shrine
Of the good Saint Valentine.
Show to him your broken heart—
Pray the Saint to take your part.
Should he intercede in vain
And the maid your heart disdain,
Call upon Saint Nicotine;
He will surely intervene.
Bring burnt off'ring to his feet,
Incense of Havana, sweet.
Then the maiden's shade invoke,
It will disappear in smoke!

MARCH

MARCH

HERE comes bluff March — a cross between
A Jester and a Libertine.
He loves to make the parson race
With wicked words his hat to chase;
To dye with compromising rose
The pious man's abstemious nose.
The ladies hate him, though he shows
A pretty taste for silken hose.
The smoker views him with distrust,
Shielding his last match from his gust.
But once alight — his holy joy
No blast from Heaven can destroy!

APRIL

APRIL

LADY April, it is clear,
Is the spoilt child of the Year.
See her tears about to start—
Thus she melts old Winter's heart.
Now the gay deceiving thing
Turns and plays the deuce with Spring.
Winter lingers at her gate;
Spring grows chilly and irate.
I'd go home if I were he—
It is just such girls as she
Make a fellow thank his stars
For the solace of cigars.

MAY

MAY

LIKE Brunhilda, May is won
By the kisses of the Sun.
Siegfried like, the maid he takes
In his arms and she awakes
To the tender piping sound
Of the birds — while all around
In a magic fire ring
Purple flames of Crocus spring.
Now I fill my fragrant briar,
Lo! it glows with gentle fire,
Wafting scented wreaths of love
To the little leaves above.

JUNE

JUNE

"WHAT so rare as a day in June?"
Thus I heard the poet croon,
To the month of roses sweet,
His song with barometric feet.
Perfect days I own are rare—
All depends on how you fare.
Can a day be perfect to
The rose that has not sipped the dew?
Can the Bee, do you suppose,
Hum, that has not sipped the rose?
Can there be for Man, I say,
Without a smoke, a perfect day?

JULY

JULY

RED rockets skyward rush pell-mell
And fill the night with noise and smell.
The stars of Heaven look down, and say:
"So this is Independence Day!
Poor earth-born stars, it makes us sad
To see your fire work like mad
To make a Human Holiday.
Where is *your* independence, pray?" —
Whereat I woke — my fire was low,
My pipe was out. Said I: "Heigho!
I never thought of it that way,
I'll give them both a holiday."

AUGUST

AUGUST

DROWSING o'er my sainted briar,
Dreaming dreams of Heart's Desire,
Dreaming 'neath the August sun,
Thus my meditations run —
What if that great Ember bright
Were a monster Pipe alight,
Or the glowing from afar
Of some Fire-God's cigar?
If the Smoker's Peace abide
In that sun fire, multiplied
By its vastness, I will be
Henceforth a devout Parsee.

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER

AS the smoker sometimes sees
In Nicotian reveries
Features of some Lovely Girl
In the tinted wreaths that curl
From his pipe; so, as we gaze
Through the soft September haze
In the years' calm afternoon
Red with summer's ashes strewn,
Through the tender veil of mist,
Woven gold and amethyst,
Summer's charming ghost we see
Decked in Indian panoply.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER

SAY! October, how in thunder
Do you keep so young, I wonder?
You're no chicken, and you know it,
Yet, old man, for all you show it,
You might, on a sunny day,
Pass for April or for May.
See, your house is falling round you,
Yet you're laughing — say! confound you,
What's the secret? How'd you do it?
Mist and moisture? Ah, I knew it!
A pipe! A mug! October brew,
Fill up — October — here's to you!

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER.

WHO'S that pedler at the door?
What! November, back once more?
Why, it seems but yesterday
That he took himself away!
Say I'm out! Tell him to go!
He has nothing new to show.
Same old lay-out every trip,
Same Pneumonia, same old Grippe,
Same old Hard Luck tales to tell,
Same Thanksgiving Day—oh, well,
Show him in—then stir the log
And bring church-warden pipes and grog.

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DECEMBER

DECEMBER

PROUDLY beams the Christmas Tree
In its tinsel finery.
Round and round in sprightly pairs
Children dance to old-time airs—
Though they laugh they make no sound;
Dancing, still they tread no ground.
Naught but airy phantoms they
Of a vanished Christmas Day,
Ancient playmates found again
In a smoke wreath's purple skein,
And they whisper in my ear,
"Does Christmas still come once a year?"

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